

MENTAL HEALTH CONSERVATORSHIP CLINICIAN

DEFINITION:

Under general supervision, to perform comprehensive investigations of adults reported to be gravely disabled due to mental illness pursuant to the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act; to recommend, establish and re-establish involuntary mental health treatment through conservatorship; and to perform related work.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

Mental Health Conservatorship Clinician is a professional mental health clinician class allocated to the Health and Human Services Agency, Mental Health Division. Incumbents in this class are responsible for interpreting and applying the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act (LPS) regarding conservatorship for persons determined to be gravely disabled (unable to provide for his/her own basic personal needs for food, clothing and shelter) due to a mental disorder. Under the supervision of a Mental Health Program Manager, Mental Health Conservatorship Clinicians, assess mental status and make recommendations to the court to terminate, establish or re-establish conservatorship status that requires a conservatee to receive treatment related to remedy or prevent the recurrence of the grave disability, and to receive medical treatment. Incumbents are also responsible for the management of involuntary mental health and/or medical care, treatment, and placement, acting on behalf of the Temporary Conservator/Conservator. This class is distinguished from the next higher class, Mental Health Program Manager, in that the latter is responsible for directing and managing the work of several units. This class differs from other mental health clinician classes in that it is not responsible for on going case management services once conservatorship is established.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:

Receives and reviews petitions, referrals, complaints or requests from the public, law enforcement, family or other mental health professionals; makes scheduled or unannounced visits with persons alleged to be a danger to themselves, to others, or gravely disabled by a mental disorder; performs clinical assessments of mental status applying LPS criteria; arranges for psychological and/or psychiatric screening and evaluation; prepares petitions for court ordered evaluations; accompanies law enforcement officers taking persons into involuntary custody for court ordered evaluations; monitors, evaluates and ensures that involuntary psychiatric evaluation and treatment is appropriate and meets professional and legal requirements; performs investigations to determine if conservatorship is appropriate; provides services related to court ordered petitions for involuntary psychiatric evaluations as specified in Welfare & Institutions Code Section 5200; provides temporary conservatorship services related to personal needs, financing, placement, or housing; investigates alleged abuse or exploitation of clients on conservatorship; prepares court petitions for temporary and permanent conservatorship; works with legal counsel; makes recommendations with the court regarding who should serve as conservator, the civil rights/limitations to be imposed, the most appropriate level of placement and treatment; performs conservatorship supervision and/or case management functions during the time the Temporary Conservatorship is in effect; visits clients in homes, skilled nursing facilities, hospitals, detention centers and other facilities to evaluate issues of conservatorship re-establishment or termination; reviews reports, evaluations, court and hearing records; meets with a variety of mental health professionals regarding the LPS status of clients; provides information, linkage and consultation to relatives, interested persons, and community agencies; prepares conservatorship investigation reports, petitions, re-establishment petitions, clinical progress notes and a variety of legal documents; represents the Conservator in court hearings and jury trials; testifies in court and at hearings; and serves as an informational resource regarding conservatorship and involuntary mental health treatment.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**Thorough Knowledge of:**

- Current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.
- Lanterman-Petris-Short Act, patient's rights, and other laws relating to mental health treatment and elder/child abuse.
- Conservatorship processes and procedures.
- Significant elements of a psychosocial history.
- Laws, rules, and regulations governing the operation of mental health agencies and facilities.
- Crisis intervention techniques.
- Psychodynamics of human behavior including developmental psychology and substance abuse.
- Social work methods, practices, policies, and procedures relating to the provision of mental health social services.
- Mental health and social service agencies, facilities and requirements in San Diego.
- Mental health therapy, interview techniques and related methods, practices and procedures.

Skills and Abilities to:

- Evaluate the psychological/mental acuity and capacity of a person suspected of being disabled or diagnosed with a mental disorder.
- Apply Lanterman-Petris-Short Act and other laws relating to patient's rights.
- Exercise sound clinical judgment and utilize diagnostic techniques for adults.
- Establish workload priorities and meet strict, legally established deadlines.
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE:

Education, training, and/or experience, which clearly demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities stated above. An example of qualifying education/experience is: a master's degree in social work, psychology, counseling or a related field, AND, three (3) years of full-time, post-degree, professional experience in a public or private agency performing clinical assessment or case management services to individuals with chronic mental impairment.

SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES OR REQUIREMENTS:**Licenses:**

Current licensure by the State of California as a Clinical Psychologist, Clinical Social Worker, or Marriage, Family, Child Counselor is required.

A valid California Class C driver's license is required at time of appointment or the ability to arrange necessary transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their personal vehicle.

Working Conditions:

Subject to standby, occasional evening and weekend work.

Background:

Applicants must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Convictions, depending on type, number, and recency may be disqualifying. Prior to appointment, candidates offered positions in Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) programs that deal with patients and/or drugs, will be subject to a limited security clearance investigation performed by the HHSA.